GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4965
ANSWERED ON:16.12.2016
Health Hazards of Sanitary Wastes
Raju Shri Gokaraju Ganga

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

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(a) whether sanitary waste/napkins such as baby napkins, adult napkins and sanitary pads pose environmental threat when thrown in the dustbin and can cause infections;

(b) whether commercial sanitary napkins contain chemicals like acetone and styrene, which is related to the increase in the incidence of menstrual cramps, if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the necessary steps taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND
FAMILY WELFARE
(SMT. ANUPRIYA PATEL)
(a): No study has been conducted on the environmental threat posed or infections caused by disposal of sanitary napkins. The sanitary waste/ napkins/pads are often synthetic and thus take several years to decompose. This burden adds to the environmental hazards.
Source: ICMR, MoEFCC

(b): No studies in scientific journals address this issue.
Source: ICMR

(c): Government has shown its concern towards the improvement in menstrual health and hygiene of the women and is promoting provision of vending machines for the sanitary napkins. As per Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016, the sanitary waste like diapers, sanitary pads etc., should be disposed off in the pouches provided by the manufacturers or brand owners or in a suitable wrapping material and discard the same in the bin meant for dry waste/non bio-degradable waste.